

GOOD NEIGHBOR ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD U.S.-MEXICO BORDER REGION MONTHLY ROUND-UP

Volume 2, Number 11

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- February 20-21 - Calexico, CA
- May 22-23 - Juarez, CH
- October 9-10 - Nogales, AZ

Judith Espinosa Resigns as Board Chair, Remains on Board

Good Neighbor's Chair, Judith Espinosa, has resigned as Chair of the Board, but will remain on the Board until the completion of her term. During her tenure as Chair, Ms. Espinosa made increased public participation a hallmark of her work and enabled the Board to greatly strengthen its communication ties to border communities. She also took a lead role in raising its visibility with senior level border-region policymakers as well as national and binational environmental officials. The entire Board wishes to express its gratitude to her for her exemplary service as Chair. We also are grateful that she has decided to remain on the Board as an academic expert from the state of New Mexico, and look forward to her continued contributions.

The process of appointing a new Chair of the Board is under way. Under the Board's enabling legislation and an ensuing Presidential Executive Order, the EPA Administrator, currently Christine Todd Whitman, has responsibility for designating the Chair.

Board Releases Fifth Report to the President and Congress

The Good Neighbor Environmental Board released its Fifth Report to the President and Congress of the United States at a press conference in Washington, D.C. on January 22, 2002. The report recommends that the federal government take nine steps to protect the region's water resources and air quality, as well as safely manage the growing number of hazardous materials found there.

Press coverage thus far has included the following media: San Diego Tribune article and editorial; BNA Environment Report newsletter article; CA Capitol Hill bulletin article; and an on-line article and op ed on the Interhemispheric Resource Center's new Americas web site.

To order a copy of the report, telephone 1-800-490-9198 and ask for the report by name and publication number, which is EPA 130-R-02-001. The report will be published on the Board's web site shortly; that address is www.epa.gov/ocem/gneb-page.htm

Board Hosts Expert Panel Session, Strategic Planning Session

Good Neighbor recently brought together border-region environmental experts to forecast likely scenarios for the coming year at an expert panel session called Border Forecast 2002. The session took place in Washington, D.C. on January 24th, 2002. It was part of the Board's annual strategic planning session.

Panelists and keynote speakers included senior officials from federal agencies with border-region programs as well as private and public sector organizations. The purpose of the session was to solicit views to be considered by the Board as it formulates its next set of recommendations to the President and Congress in its next report. On the previous day, the Board held a full-day strategic planning session in which it outlined its goals for the year 2002 and strategies to meet them. One of the feature topics was how to most effectively capture community concerns during its three upcoming border-region meetings and have them reflected in its next report to the President and Congress.

Next Meeting to Take Place 2/20-21 in Calexico at SDSU Imperial Valley Campus

The library of the San Diego State University Imperial Valley Campus in Calexico, California has been selected as the meeting site for the Board's next meeting on February 20-21, 2002. On the first day, guest speakers will address local environmental concerns, especially water and energy issues, and a public comment session will take place. Discussion will begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 5:30 p.m.. The following day, the Board will conduct a routine half-day business meeting that begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 12:00 noon.

The library is located at 720 Heber Avenue in Calexico.

Border Region and National News

from the Good Neighbor Environmental Board
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****Note: The items in the section below have been cut-and-pasted and compiled from other documents. Please check a primary source to ensure complete accuracy. Web sites may have to be re-entered.****

Air -Particulate matter (PM) - EPA has approved Arizona's PM plan, which places special emphasis on compliance for the Phoenix area. See www.epa.gov/region09/air

Particulate matter (PM)- EPA's STAR program has awarded research grants to four universities, including the University of California at Davis, to study the effects of PM on human health. See www.epa.gov/ncercqa

Transportation - EPA is proposing non-conformance penalties that would be available to manufacturers of heavy-duty diesel engines used in large trucks and buses if the manufacturer is unable to meet the 2004 model year hydrocarbon plus nitrogen oxides emission standard. Under a penalty structure previously established by regulation, manufacturers may choose to pay a monetary penalty rather than comply with the applicable standard. Deadline for public comments: March 18. See www.epa.gov/otaq/hd-hwy.htm

Transportation - EPA is making available its final Mobile6 emissions model, which predicts emissions from cars and light-duty trucks and can be used as a tool in creating state air quality plans and assessments of transportation activities. See www.epa.gov/otaq/m6.htm

BECC - Merit Award - BECC is inviting border-region institutions and individuals to propose candidates to receive

its annual Environmental Merit Award. See www.cocef.org

Projects - Approved during December, 2001:

Step 1

a) basic wastewater system for the Anapra colony of the City Juarez, Chihuahua; b) action plan to manage the Basin of the River Conchos, Chihuahua; and c) San Juan water treatment plant expansion

Technical assistance requested and approved

a) La Joya, Texas - wastewater; b) Del Rio, Texas- solid waste; c) Dona Ana, New Mexico - solid waste; d) Cananea, Sonora - solid waste; e) Anahuac, Nuevo Leon - solid waste landfill

Technical assistance approved

a) Eagle Pass, Texas - water and wastewater

Projects - To be considered for certification at next Board mtg. 3/20 in Austin, TX:

a) Improvements to water and wastewater systems for El Paso County Water & Control Improvement District #4; and b) Water and Wastewater Regional System Improvements for Eagle Pass, Texas

Projects - Under mandate expansion, projects in Step 1 phase:

a) Agua Prieta, SON - Douglas, AZ - street paving project to reduce dust in a non-attainment area; b) Anahuac, NL - installation of a municipal and non-hazardous industrial incinerator waste; c) Nogales, SON - Nogales, AZ - east loop in Nogales, SON to bypass border traffic from downtown area and thereby reduce emissions; also, street paving to reduce dust in a non-attainment area; d) Coahuila - Carbon I and II recycling of fly ash and tires; and e) Brownsville, TX - tire crumbing process to produce rubber products.

CEC - Grants available - The CEC is seeking proposals for community-based projects that complement the CEC's own work, especially projects that link energy and sustainability. Deadline: April 1. See: www.cec.org

Children's Health - Lead - EPA and HUD have announced a landmark lead disclosure settlement under which one of the nation's largest property management firms will test and clean up lead-based paint hazards in more than 130,000 apartments in 47 states and D.C. See www.epa.gov/oeca/ore/apolguid.html

Energy - Mexicali power plants - Presidential permits have been issued to Sempra Energy and InterGen to erect power plants near Mexicali, Baja California. Imperial County, California officials say they want the plants to meet U.S. standards, as their communities' air quality will worsen otherwise. The plants are scheduled to provide electricity to both sides of the border.

Transmission line - Arizona utility regulators have approved a high-voltage electric transmission line from 15 miles south of Tucson to the Nogales area. The plan now requires approval from federal agencies and must obtain a permit from DOE to cross the Mexican border to connect with the power grid there.

Enforcement - Data - According to EPA's latest accomplishments report on its enforcement and compliance assurance results for FY 2001, the data shows record-setting expenditures of \$4.3 billion by violators for pollution controls and environmental cleanup during that time period. See: www.epa.gov/oeca/main/fedgov/accomplish.html

Habitat Preservation - Colorado River Delta - According to a recent article in the Washington Post, a lawsuit filed by eight groups against DOI calls for broadening the scope of the Endangered Species Act to include threatened habitats in border regions outside U.S. territory. Observers concerned about loss of habitat in the dry lower Colorado River delta in Mexico are tracking the outcome.

Grants - National Wildlife Federation announces the availability of grants through the Keep the Wild Alive's Species Recovery Fund. Deadline: February 15, 2002. See: www.nwf.wildalive/srf/srfhome.html

Hazardous Materials - Workshops - The San Diego Dept. of Environmental Health will present workshops on 1) import/export requirements for hazardous materials and wastes and 2) emergency response to incidents with hazardous materials and wastes. They will take place between February and April in Tijuana, Tecate, Ensenada,

and Mexicali. Contact: Jesus Torres, (619) 278-3747, jtorres@dtsc.ca.gov

IBWC - South Bay Citizens' Forum - USIBWC has announced that 10 San Diego County residents have been selected to serve as inaugural board members of the forum. Contact: sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov

Sewage Treatment - IBWC has announced that negotiations have begun on amending a treaty to allow a private sewage treatment plant to be built in Tijuana. Currently, the treaty requires cross-border sewage flows to be treated on the U.S. side of the border.

Reports - Border XXI: Progress Report - EPA announces release of the *"U.S.-Mexico Border XXI Program: Progress Report 1996-2001."* The report describes challenges faced by the region and the work of the Program's nine workgroups to address these challenges. Call: 1-800-490-9198 and ask for EPA publication number 160/R/00/001

CEC: State of the Environment - The CEC has published *"North American Mosaic,"* which describes the state of the environment in North America. The section on freshwater discusses the increased focus on groundwater supplies in the U.S.-Mexico border region and calls for strong binational cooperation. See www.cec.org/soe

GAO: Water Infrastructure - The U.S. GAO has released a report on federal assistance for water infrastructure. Among its findings: in addition to federal funds, there are 56 different state-sponsored grant programs for drinking water and/or wastewater infrastructure. See www.gao.gov

NACEPT: Emerging Environmental Trends - The National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT), which advises EPA, has released a new report containing recommendations to Administrator Whitman called *"The Environmental Future: Emerging challenges and Opportunities for the EPA."* Recommendations related to energy include spurring investment in renewable energy resources and energy efficiency technologies through Clean Air Act State Implementation Plans. Water recommendations include developing a holistic approach to water and the environment, working with EPA, other federal agencies, and non-governmental stakeholders. See www.epa.gov/ocem/nacept-page.htm

Good Neighbor Environmental Board: Fifth Report - *"The Fifth Report of the Good Neighbor Environmental Board to the President and Congress"* contains nine recommendations related to air, water, and hazardous materials. (See lead story.)

Sewage Treatment - Imperial Beach - The City of Imperial Beach, California and Scripps Institution of Oceanography have teamed up to track local ocean pollution by sewage. Scripps will use a type of Dopplar radar called CODAR to receive real-time information that helps track the flow of pollution and aid in long-term sewage treatment planning. See www.uniontrib.com/news/uniontrib/wed/metro/news_6m30codar.htm

Tribal Issues - Toxic substances - EPA and HHS invite applications for research on the relationship between lifestyle and cultural practices of tribal populations, and risks from toxic substances in the environment. See http://es.epa.gov/ncer/rfa/02trib_risk.htm

Water - Operations - A series of public information meetings have been set up to get input on a draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Upper Rio Grande Basin Water Operations. For schedule for meetings in New Mexico and Colorado February-May, contact: rgraham@ose.state.nm.us

Wastewater - Work has begun on the Master Plan for Potable Water and Wastewater Infrastructure for Tijuana and Playas de Rosarito, Baja California, Mexico. Public meetings will be held. See www.epa.gov/region09/water/tijuana/fact1101mp.pdf

Wastewater - Construction of a new wastewater treatment plant has begun in San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora. See www.yumasun.com/news3.html

Watersheds - The California Coastal Conservancy has awarded a grant to restore the Tijuana River watershed. The project will build sediment basins that will capture the fill material and provide access to a State

park by raising the roadbed.

Watersheds- In his 2003 budget, President Bush has included \$21 million for a new EPA community-based initiative that will award grants to up to 20 watersheds across the country. See www.epa.gov/owow/watershed

Water Supply - New Mexico-based Center for Biological Diversity, represented by the Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest, has filed a lawsuit over what is says is the state's long-term overuse of its groundwater supplies.

Water Supply- According to a recent article in *WaterTech.Online*, the Texas Water Development Board has adopted the 2002 State Water Plan. The plan describes how local governments throughout the state of Texas will address water supply needs for the next 50 years.

Water Supply, Habitat Preservation - Officials continue to discuss the transfer of Colorado River water, in the form of run-off from Imperial County farms, by aqueduct to San Diego County and coastal Baja California. They also are looking at how that diversion would affect the Salton Sea, which currently receives the run-off and provides habitat for wildlife. Diversion plans are the result of a seven-state Colorado River agreement reached last year that requires California to adopt water-saving measures by the end of this year.

Website - The Interhemispheric Resource Center (IRC) has launched a new Americas program with its own website. The U.S.-Mexico border work the IRC conducted via BIOS, *borderlines*, and the *borderlines UPDATER* have been folded into the new initiative. See www.americaspolicy.org.

Events Calendar

from the Good Neighbor Environmental Board
January 2002 Round-Up

Notes: Event listings below have been drawn from other lists and may have changed. Please check a primary source for more details.

Events specific to border region are in bold. Web sites may have to be re-entered. Please notify Editor if dates are incorrect or have changed.

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| Feb 7 | Border Program: Water Issues in the Deming Area, Deming, N.M. Contact: Gedi Cibas, NM Environment Dept., (505) 827-2176. |
| Feb 7-8 | Fourth Annual Environmental Law on the Border Conference, sponsored by Continuing Legal Education International. Contact: Ed Ranger, (480) 784-6886, www.cle.org |
| Feb 13 | EPA El Paso Border Office Monthly Border Forum, John Sproul, UTEP, The Rio Bosque Story, El Paso, TX. |
| Feb 14 | EPA San Diego Border Office Monthly Open House, San Diego, CA. <i>Note: Speakers include Good Neighbor Board members Jennifer Kraus and Diane Rose.</i> |
| Feb 18 | CEC: Assessing Barriers and Opportunities for Renewable Energy in North America. See www.cec.org |
| Feb 20-21 | Good Neighbor Environmental Board Meeting, Calexico, CA. |
| Feb 20-23 | Rio Bravo/Rio Grande Environmental Conference, South Padre Island, TX. |
| Feb 23-27 | Watershed 2002, Fort Lauderdale, FL. See www.wef.org |
| Feb 26-1Mar | 11 th Int. Conference on Aquatic Invasive Species, Alexandria, VA. See www.aquatic-invasive-species-conference.org |
| Mar | EPA El Paso Border Office Monthly Border Forum, Paso Del Norte women in the environmental |

	field, El Paso, TX.
Mar 7-8	CEC mtg. on Children's Health and the Environment in North America, Mexico City. See www.cec.org
Mar 20	BECC Board of Directors meeting, Austin, TX.
April 2-3	Annual EPA Border Enforcement Workshop (internal), San Diego, CA
April 10	EPA El Paso Border Office Monthly Border Forum, Evelyn Daniels, EPA R6, Children's Environmental Health, El Paso, TX.
May 6-8	Border Institute IV, Rio Rico, AZ. See www.scerp.org
May 8	EPA El Paso Border Office Monthly Border Forum, El Paso, TX.
May 15-17	4 th Conference on Research and Resource Management in the Southwestern Deserts, Tucson, AZ. See www.werc.usgs.gov/sdfs/meetings.html
May 17-21	River Network's 3 rd Annual River Rally, Asheville, NC. See www.rivernetwork.org
May 20-24	Third National Water Quality Monitoring Conference; includes workshop on data comparability across international boundaries, Madison, WI. Contact: John Klein, USGS, (650)329-5264.
May 22-23	Good Neighbor Environmental Board Meeting, Juarez, CH
June 4-7	U.S.-Mexico Border Health Association Annual Meeting, Chihuahua, Chihuahua
June	CEC Annual Council Session, Ottawa, Ontario
June 12	EPA El Paso Border Office Monthly Border Forum, El Paso, TX.
July 23-26	Universities Council on Water Resources Annual Conference, "Integrated Transboundary Water Management," Traverse City, Michigan. See www.uwin.siu.edu/ucowr/
Oct 9-10 -	Good Neighbor Environmental Board Meeting, Nogales, AZ
Oct 21-23	Race for Clean Water Conference 2002, Dover, DE. See www.dnrec.state.de
Dec	EPA National Compliance Assistance Providers Forum, San Antonio, TX.
<u>2003</u>	
Mar 16-23	The 3rd World Water Forum, Kyoto, Shiga and Osaka, Japan. See www.worldwaterforum.org

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